

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3097  
DEA WASHDC  
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 0955

DEPARTMENT FOR S/NM AND ARA, AID FOR SER/INC

CARACAS FOR DEA

EO: 11652: GDS  
TAGS: SNAR CO  
SUBJ: NARCOTICS: OPERATION KITCHEN STATUS REPORT (DEC 15 JAN 30)

REF: BOGOTA 12018 AND 0402

OPERATION KITCHEN--UNDERWAY SINCE MED-OCTOBER--CONTINUES TO RUN SMOOTHLY AND SUCCESSFULLY DESPITE SOME INITIAL TEETHING PROBLEMS, WHICH HAVE NOW BEEN OVERCOME. DEA HAS ASSIGNED FOUR ADDITIONAL AGENTS TO THE OPERATION IN SUPPORT OF SOME 20 FULL-TIME POLICE (F-2) NARCOTICS INVESTIGATORS AND GOC LAWYERS WORKING ON KITCHEN IN THREE DIFFERENT CITIES. SEIZURES TO DATE TOTAL 464 KILOGRAMS OF COCAINE, SIX VEHICLES, ONE AIRCRAFT, TWO CLANDESTINE LABORATORIES AND 91,000 DOLLARS CASH. NATIONAL POLICE HAVE ARRESTED FIFTY-TWO MAJOR TRAFFICKERS, OF WHOM TWO HAVE BEEN CONVICTED AND SENTENCED TO MAXIMUM PRISON TERMS. THE MISSION, DEA AND THE GOC HAVE AGREED TO EXTEND KITCHEN FOR ONE MONTH UNTIL MARCH 1 IN ORDER TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EXCELLENT INTELLIGENCE DEVELOPED OVER THE FIRST THREE MONTHS OF OPERATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. AS A RESULT OF EARLY SUCCESSES AND HARD INTELLIGENCE DEVELOPED BY INFORMANTS AND COURT-APPROVED WIRE TAPS, DEA IN EARLY JANUARY DOUBLED TO EIGHT THE NUMBER OF TDY AGENTS ASSIGNED TO OPERATION KITCHEN. TWO SPANISH-SPEAKING TDY AGENTS ARE NOW ASSIGNED  
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IN AN ADVISORY CAPACITY TO EACH OF THE THREE CITIES (CALI, MEDEL-

LIN AND BOGOTA) COVERED UNDER THE OPERATION. TWO OTHER AGENTS (ONE OF THEM A COMMUNICATIONS TECHNICIAN) ARE ASSIGNED TO BOGOTA TO PROVIDE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT. DURING THE COURSE OF THE OPERATION--UNDERWAY SINCE OCTOBER 15--DEA HAS SUPPLIED TO THE NATIONAL POLICE THE SERVICES OF 15 CONFIDENTIAL INFORMANTS FROM THE UNITED STATES AND SIX UNILATERAL DEA INFORMANTS FROM COLOMBIA.

2. FOR ITS PART, THE NATIONAL POLICE (F-2) NARCOTICS UNIT CONTINUES TO PROVIDE THE FULL-TIME SERVICES OF SOME 18 SPECIAL

AGENTS AND OFFICERS F-2 FIELD AGENTS OPERATE IN TEAMS OF FIVE OR SIX AGENTS IN EACH OF THREE CITIES WITH SUPPORT PROVIDED BY F-2 NARCOTICS HEADQUARTERS IN BOGOTA. ADDITIONAL F-2 AGENTS ARE ASSIGNED TO THE OPERATION AS NEEDED. FOR PURPOSES OF COORDINATION WITH OTHER OFFICIAL GOC SERVICES, TWO ATTORNEYS FROM THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL WORK DIRECTLY WITH F-2 OPERATIVES. THESE ATTORNEYS PROVIDE LEGAL ADVISORY SERVICES AND HELP PREPARE CASES DEVELOPED UNDER OPERATION KITCHEN FOR PROSECUTION IN COLOMBIAN COURTS.

3. TO DATE, KITCHEN HAS RESULTED IN THE SEIZURE OF 464 KILOGRAMS OF COCAINE PASTE, BASE AND HYDROCHLORIDE, ONE AIRCRAFT, SIX VEHICLES, 91,000 DOLLARS IN CASH, AND TWO CLANDESTINE COCAINE LABORATORIES. POLICE HAVE ARRESTED 52 DEFENDANTS, THREE OF THEM AMERICANS. TWO DEFENDANTS HAVE BEEN CONVICTED, SENTENCED 15-YEAR JAIL TERMS AND FINED A TOTAL OF 1,500 DOLLARS. GOC PROSECUTORS ARE HOLDING IN ABEYANCE SIX ADDITIONAL INDICTMENTS AGAINST MAJOR COLOMBIAN TRAFFICKERS IN ORDER NOT TO ENDANGER ON-GOING INVESTIGATIONS.

4. LOGISTICAL PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED EARLY-ON IN THE OPERATION HAVE BEEN OVERCOME. CRYSTALS AND SPARE PARTS FOR THE F-2 RADIO NET HAVE ARRIVED AND ARE NOW BEING INSTALLED BY OUR CONTRACTOR, MOTOROLA. IN ADDITION, DEA HAS SUPPLIED 19 TAPE RECORDERS REQUESTED BY F-2 FOR COURT-AUTHORIZED WIRE TAPS ON MAJOR COLOMBIAN TRAFFICKERS. AS REPORTED IN BOGOTA 12018, WIRE TAP EVIDENCE IS ADMISSIBLE IN COLOMBIAN COURTS. TAPS EMPLOYED UNDER OPERATION KITCHEN IN CALI AND BOGOTA ARE ENTIRELY UNDER THE CONTROL OF F-2 WITH THE FULL KNOWLEDGE AND APPROVAL OF THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND THE GOC ATTORNEY GENERAL.

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5. PROBLEMS OF NON-PRODUCTIVITY ON THE PART OF SOME CONFIDENTIAL INFORMANTS ASSIGNED TO KITCHEN FROM DEA DOMESTIC OFFICES APPEAR TO HAVE DISAPPEARED. DEA-BOGOTA AND F-2 BOTH REPORT BETTER SUCCESS WITH USING INTELLIGENCE DEVELOPED BY INFORMANTS, AS WELL AS THROUGH ELECTRONIC MEANS. THE GENERAL GOC SECURITY CRACK-DOWN, HOWEVER, CONTINUES ON OCCASION TO HAMPER OPERATIONS, PARTICULARLY IN MEDELLIN AND TRAFFICKERS ARE STILL TAKING UNUSUAL PRECAUTIONS

TO AVOID DETECTION.

6. IN SUM, WE CONTINUE TO BE VERY SATISFIED WITH PROGRESS ON OPERATION KITCHEN. COOPERATION BETWEEN DEA AND THE NATIONAL POLICE CONTINUES EXCELLENT. DEA INVOLVEMENT IN THE OPERATION REMAINS LOW-KEY DESPITE THE ADDITION OF NEW AGENTS. THERE HAVE BEEN NO INCIDENTS INVOLVING DEA OFFICIALS AND NO PRESS IDENTIFICATION OF DEA PARTICIPATION IN NARCOTICS OPERATIONS HERE. OUR RECENT CONSULTATIONS WITH THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND THE CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL POLICE INDICATE THEY TOO ARE PLEASED WITH THE ENFORCEMENT GAINS AND ON-THE-JOB TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED BY OPERATION KITCHEN TO DATE. AS A RESULT, THE GOC RECENTLY AGREED TO EXTEND OPERATION FOR AN ADDITIONAL 30 DAYS (UNTIL MARCH 1) IN ORDER TO TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF INTELLIGENCE DEVELOPED AND NEW TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATIONS IDENTIFIED.

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